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THE STATE OF THE NATION.

A SERMON.

BY

JOHN W. CHADWICK,

MINISTER OF THE SECOND UNITARIAN CHURCH IN BROOKLYN.

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THE STATE OF THE NATION.

It was formerly the custom at least twice a year, on Fast-day and at Thanksgiving-time, for teachers of religion to remind their hearers that they were not only individuals, not only members of a family circle, or of a church or town community, but also citizens of a great nation, and to invite them to consider *the state of the nation*, if haply so considering some path of public duty might be made more plain, some public sin be dragged to light, some public danger be proclaimed in time to be averted. This custom has never fallen into entire disuse, but since the war for liberty and honor, and the immediately succeeding agonies of reconstruction, the preacher has been more content than he was formerly upon these special occasions to dwell in a region of sentiment, to be poetical about the grapes and corn, and to leave questions of a more special nature for the newspapers and the politicians to debate and settle. The reason for this change is obvious to some extent. For many years before the war the idea generally prevailed in ministerial minds that there was really but one national sin, and that the sin of slavery. And although it was sometimes a test of courage for the minister to say his plainest word about this

sin, aware that A or B, perhaps his wealthiest parishioner, was inwardly making a running commentary on his performance which sometimes became audibly profane, yet the courage demanded for such utterance was not so great as if the sinner had been there before him in the pews. Then, the long-smouldering volcano having broken out into the fierce wrath of civil war, the special occasions were improved by pulpit orators to criticise the generalship of Burnside or McClellan, or to insist that the government should use its war-power to make an end of slavery. Still further on, the preacher found his occupation in demanding that the reconstruction of the South should be upon the basis of equal rights for all. This also having been finally accomplished, it must be confessed that the preacher soon began to find it much more difficult than it had been to deal with public questions in his pulpit. The question of a proper currency became more and more the uppermost question in the political sphere, and this question is not one the right and wrong of which appear so plain to the average mind as of other questions which had preceded it. The preacher might well feel suspicious of his ability to adjudicate upon so critical a matter, when close at hand in the community were men of equal practical sagacity, equally able to succeed in practical affairs, who nevertheless differed as widely as possible concerning the engrossing question of the time. And so his function has been more and more confined to personal ethics, with an occasional raid upon the civil service or

a (generally) too indiscriminate attack upon the honesty of our public officers.

All this has been very natural, and perhaps unavoidable, but in the mean time the nation has been "sounding on, a dim and perilous way," now swerving this way and now that, and finally, to all appearance, it has quite irrevocably declared itself for that financial policy which seems to me the policy of simple honesty. It is neither here nor there whether the national financiering was wisely managed amid the overwhelming excitement of the war, and under the enormous pressure of those immediate necessities which it imposed upon us. There is the simple fact that under that pressure, amid that excitement, we made certain promises; and having made them, and upon the strength of them furnished ourselves with the sinews of war, there is nothing left for us to do but keep those promises, let come what will, and every man in the United States ought to prefer to live as simply as his father and grandfather did before him, and simpler, if need be, rather than that the promises which the nation made should not be kept to the last syllable: and so they would, the poorest first of all, if the appeal had been made not to their selfishness and envy, but to their honor and their truth.

"So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When duty whispers low *Thou must*,
The heart replies *I can*."

But if the preachers have of late been more reluctant than formerly to enter on considera-

tions of national duty and danger, the voice of criticism and of prophecy and warning has not failed us utterly. Rather has it made itself frequently and loudly heard, and it has been no "lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument." Beyond the angry surge of war we thought we saw the smiling gleam of a millennial time ; but like the crusading children whose "Jerusalem the golden" turned out to be a squalid hamlet, swarming with thieves and harlots, so has what we took to be the goal of our desire proved to be but a single stage of an illimitable journey which still lengthens out before us, hundreds of weary miles. Never, it is safe to say, since we became a nation has there been so deep a tone of national distrust as there is now. Lying upon my desk as I wrote this sermon was a Thanksgiving sermon written more than a hundred years ago. It was preached December 15th, 1774, by Ezra Stiles, the great-grandfather of my friend William Gannett, the President of Yale College, and the most distinguished minister of his time. It is a manuscript sermon, but the writing is still legible enough, although the hand that wrote it has so long been dust. "It is the darkest day," he says, "that ever America saw." The first Continental Congress had met in Philadelphia only a few weeks before. And it was dark enough. But the darkness was from the overshadowing cloud of British tyranny. The light within the people was not darkness yet, and now we know that darkness held within its bosom the promise of our

national independence. Many a time since then have men been ready to take up those words of the old revolutionary preacher and say, "It is the darkest day that ever America saw." And more than once, no doubt, it has been true. But every time the darkness has been a forerunner of the light. And every time, till now, the danger seemed to come either from some power outside the state or from some party in the state which threatened it with ruin. Never before has there been prevalent, as there is now, a very wide distrust not only of the fundamental character of our republican institutions, but, which is the saddest thing of all, of the moral fibre of the American people. Men are saying, The institutions are good enough, only they are too good for the people. They require virtue for their successful operation, and virtue is not to be had. The rich care only for their riches; the poor care only to do as little work as possible for the most pay they can browbeat their employers into giving them. This sort of talk and feeling is not so much here and there as it is everywhere. It is, you might say, in the air. But now and then it is condensed into some newspaper or magazine article of unusual force, which attracts much attention and does much to increase the amount of pessimistic thought and feeling in the community.

The extent to which this thought and feeling enter into individual minds is dependent very largely upon subjective conditions. "To him who wears a shoe," the saying is, "it is as if the earth were carpeted with leather." So long as a

man's own business and digestion are first rate, the chances are that he will take a very cheerful view of the political and social situation. But let his business or digestion get into a bad way, and straightway he is haunted by visions of general bankruptcy, and communism, and so on. For the most part, too, theories of radical social reform are generally the offspring of the involuntary idleness of cultured men whose self-esteem obliges them to suspect a fundamental weakness in the structure of society in order to account for their individual misfortunes. They cannot conceive it possible that in a well-ordered society, even if in a well-ordered universe, persons of their ability should not have everything they want. And as the involuntary idleness of cultivated men is the seed-garden of radical social ideas, so the wide field in which these ideas are broadcast is the involuntary idleness of uncultivated men, who if they had work enough to do, and consequently bread enough to eat and clothes enough to wear, would have neither the time nor disposition to inflame themselves with vague anticipations of a general breaking-up of the existing order.

Nevertheless, we must beware lest our own well-fed optimism obscure for us the facts. Making all due allowance for subjective bias in men's estimate of the political and social situation, the fact remains that in the state of the nation there are at present a good many things which are not as they should be, and which may well excite the interest of the most thoughtful

men. And by *the state of the nation* I do not mean the state of the government. One of the hopeful signs of the times is that so many are coming to see that the nation and the government of the nation are not equivalent terms. The nation is the total life of forty millions of people and more here in America. The government, or rather the administration of the government, does not include, national and state together, the official life of more than half a million people, if so many. And this distinction between the government and the administration of the government is another distinction that we ought to learn to make. The best governments are capable of reckless administration. The government of England now is the same that it was a dozen years ago. But the administration is very different; in Gladstone's day it was ministerial and parliamentary, now it is almost wholly personal. Men talk about our government as if the system of official patronage were an essential part of it. But it is nothing of the sort. The election of John Quincy Adams in 1826 was to all intents and purposes a party change, and yet John Quincy Adams only removed two civil officers out of the thousands under his control, while Andrew Jackson, his immediate successor, removed hundreds and thousands. I do not mean that administration is everything, the form of government indifferent. Some forms of government are premiums upon official tyranny and corruption. But the best form of government that can be devised is capable of maladministration, as the best locomotive

that was ever built is capable of running a whole train-load of passengers into perdition if a drunken engineer and fireman have it in charge. I do not doubt there are details of the American government which can be improved. But take it as it is, and let the administration of it be of corresponding wisdom and justice, and there shall not be a government on the face of the earth that shall insure so much security of life and property, and so much general happiness, as ours. Ay, even as it is, with all the maladministration, it is the best government to live under that the sun shines upon.

The administration of the government is one factor in the state of the nation, but it is not exhaustive of the whole. As one factor, however, it is an important one. And I shall not deny that in the administration of our government there is abundant ground, not for despairing of the republic, but for the deepest sorrow and humiliation. There is, however, little need for me to say anything upon this head, the whole subject has so recently been canvassed here by one who is the most earnest and eloquent antagonist of our present system in the whole country. And I need not remind you how conclusively Mr. Curtis proved that this system is neither essential to our republican form of government, seeing that until the time of Andrew Jackson, that incarnate mob, we never had any such system, nor to our method of party politics, seeing that England has this method just as much as we, without our monstrous system of official patronage. But there are

other evils in the administration of the government besides the maladministration of the civil service. Theoretically our government is a government of the people, by the people, for the people. Practically it is not exactly this. It is a government of the people, by the caucus, for—the Lord knows whom. We must vote for the candidates nominated by the caucuses, or our vote is thrown away. The moral is, that if a man would have political influence, if he would have his unit count, he must attend the primaries. But here again the individual is a mere puppet. A set of candidates has been agreed upon beforehand. Everything has been cut and dried by a few ignorant but very knowing persons in the back parlor of some retailer of wine and lager-bier. "What are you going to do about it?" The individual alone can do next to nothing. But honest men of force and pluck can so combine that they can counteract to some extent the back-parlor oligarchies. If they do not, then we may well despair for the Republic. *The Nation*, which would be infallible if its conceit could make it so, says that men of force and pluck will not combine to secure honest administration; that they would rather be plundered by political rings than take the trouble to break them. If it is so, then the most pessimistic view of our political situation is likeliest to be true. That form of government cannot be devised which like a perfect crystal shall exclude from itself all impurity. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." This ancient saying has not yet lost its point. But I have faith that there are men of

force and pluck in all our cities, towns, and villages who, once they realize the situation, will go to work to mend it with a will. Here is a splendid opportunity for you young men to break up the monotony of your too joyous lives or the dull apathy of your habitual amusements. You rejoice in athletic physical sports. Here is a chance for an athletic mind ; sometimes, perhaps, for an athletic body too. Here is occasion for you to brace and measure yourselves against the ignorance and criminality of the community. The future of America is in your hands if you are equal to the task imposed upon you by the present emergency, if you can rise to the high level of your glorious opportunity.

One of the saddest things in our political situation is the draining off of the best talent of the country from the sphere of politics into the sphere of mercantile activity. Time was when the best men in the community, the most able, the most cultured, looked to the political arena as the one place which they would choose wherein to exercise their gifts. For a long time this has not been the case. The acquisition of wealth has had superior attractions to the acquisition of political power. But now that wealth has proved a dead-sea apple in so many hands, I can but hope that once again our best young men, upon the very threshold of their career, will set their hearts upon the acquisition of political power, and, to the end that they may be worthy custodians of it, I would have them give the best part of their mental energy to studying the science and the art of government, and especi-

ally to making themselves acquainted with the origin and development of our own political system. One day, while I was at my bookseller's, a man came in and said, "Have you got any book about money?" He had been elected to Congress only the day before, and he was going to read up! Here was a specimen of the men who do our financial legislation. And yet we speak of professional politicians with a sneer. Why, the desideratum of the time is a class of professional politicians, men with political ambition, but not less with political culture and political enthusiasm, and stern resolve that the political administration of America shall not always be the sweetest consolation of monarchs and aristocrats across the sea; nay, but a herald of their doom.

We want here in America not only a class of professional politicians, men educated to the science and the art of government as carefully as physicians are educated to the science and the art of medicine and lawyers to the science and the art of law, but also a class of educated journalists who shall make journalism as much a profession, and as honorable a one, as divinity or medicine or law. Journalism is to-day the one great force in our American life. In power and opportunity it is what the pulpit was one hundred years ago. The newspapers make and unmake the politicians. But they are seldom leaders of thought. They lag behind the average intelligence and moral sentiment of the community. They consult expediency instead of justice. They are organs of party, not of the spirit. They do not keep both eyes for

truth, but always one for the subscription-list. They do not lead, but follow, popular sentiment. Let this decree that Gen. Grant or Gen. Butler shall be the next President, and one by one every Republican or Democratic paper, as the case may be, will fall into line and discover that the candidate has all the cardinal virtues ; or, under the plea of "principles, not men," conveniently forget a hundred doughty editorials of which the inspiring theme, and justly so, was, "Men are incarnate principles." To say a thing in such a way that just the opposite thing can be said three months hence without apparent contradiction is journalism considered as a fine art. The press is nothing if it is not oracular. Men quote to me as if they were infallible the judgments of the press on this book or that picture, when the chances are the criticism is written by a callow youth who confounds Edmund with Herbert Spencer, and but for the name in the corner could not distinguish between a painting by Alma Tadema and one by Gustave Doré. No matter how little the journalist knows about anything ; if he can talk about it as if he knew everything, he is all right. The newsboy becomes a reporter and the reporter an editor, his grammar and his rhetoric debauched by having read newspapers and nothing else. And so it happens that although the press is a great power, it is a power for evil quite as often as for good. What we need is a profession of journalism, the training for which shall combine all the details of printing and of office-work together with many years of special study upon history and social science. I know of

one young man who is training himself for journalism in this way. First a practical printer, he next acquired a first-rate college education, and now he is studying hard, especially in American history, drenching himself with its facts and its philosophy, and fitting himself thus to be a real teacher of his fellow-citizens. There must be many others of whom I do not know, but there ought to be hundreds of young men in America to-day at work in this direction, and sooner or later there must be if American journalism is going to be a savor unto life and not unto death. What I have now said is broadly true, but of course there are particular exceptions. There are journals which are representative of both culture and conscience, and this because men of culture and conscience sit in their editorial chairs.

The decay of patriotism in America is a notable sign of the times. But though Dr. Johnson said, "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel," the saying is not any truer than a hundred other of his sayings—the offspring of ill-temper and defective culture and a narrow mind—if it was intended to impeach the value of patriotism and not merely the value of the scoundrel. "O Liberty," said Madame Roland, "how many crimes have been committed in thy name!" and yet she did not doubt the good of liberty. Religion has from first to last been the cloak of innumerable hypocrisies, and yet religion is no worse on this account. We need an avatar of patriotism, a new birth of it, here in America. It need not be narrow and provincial. It need not be conceited.

It need not blind us to our faults; nay, rather it may make us lynx-eyed to search them out. Mr. Emerson has written recently, "Let the passion for America cast out the passion for Europe." But there are some things in Europe we ought to have a passion for. I cannot sympathize with Emerson's desire that we should have a distinctive American dress and architecture and literature, and so on. Let us seek the best everywhere. At the same time I do detest the sycophantic way in which we wait for foreign verdicts on our American products. English enthusiasm did not prove Joaquin Miller a true poet, and English depreciation cannot prove our noble Whittier anything but one. And I would have a "passion for America," and not only a passion for her honor and her righteousness, but also a passion for her beauty and prosperity, and for her history, and for her literature, and for her heroes and statesmen. We can afford to laugh at the suggestion that the Yosemite was purchased for a national park "in order to show what sort of natural scenery can be produced under a republican form of government," and still be very proud of the Yosemite and the White Mountains and the Adirondacks and Niagara. Spread-eagleism has had its day, but I should like to have a little more of that good, healthy sense of national glory and achievement of which the most cultivated English writers do not seem to be ashamed. We have become much too shamefaced and apologetic. Let us acknowledge every fault and failure and still, upon the whole, dare to confront the

civilization of the world with an unblushing front. The worst of our mistakes and crimes can easily be paralleled, if not surpassed, by contemporary mistakes and crimes of England and the Continent. The wonder is we are no worse, so many of their exasperated citizens have taken refuge on our shore. Yes, let us have a passion for America; and to this end let us begin to impress upon our children's minds in earliest youth the history of our national career, teaching full soon their lips to lovingly recite the ballads of our homespun heroism and heroic men. It is the disgrace of our higher education, for the most part, that it gives ten times as much attention to foreign and ancient as to American history, when it ought to give ten times as much to American as to foreign and ancient. Surely never was history more full of romance or adventure, noble excitement, generous inspiration. It only waits the genius of a Green or a Macaulay to make such a tale of it as shall keep "children from their play and old men from the chimney-corner."

The distrust and fear which have of late succeeded to our former confidence have fastened with special violence upon universal suffrage as the bane of our political life, the promise of our irretrievable dismay. But wherever this is already established it is safe to say that it will not be disestablished. With popular sentiment more rampant than it has ever been, no franchise that has been already given to the people is going to be withdrawn. Try it, and see what thunder you will have about your ears. And however ill-

qualified thousands of voters may be, especially in our great cities, nothing is surer than that they are far less dangerous where they are than they would be on the outside of the body politic. The ballot is a convenient crater for volcanic passions that would else set the whole social continent to rumbling, undulating, and disgorging under our feet. But the inevitable corollary of universal suffrage is universal education. First, last, and always this must be insisted on. And the universal education must include some elementary instruction in the principles of the American Government and the facts of its development. And lest the schools, especially the sectarian schools, should fail to do their duty, the state or national government ought to be so far paternal in its office as to see that every home is well provided with some simple instrument for such elementary instruction. These failing of their duty, it remains for individual effort to direct itself to such an end. Would that to this some elementary instruction might be added in the principles of political economy! If this had always been a part of our common-school education, I think we should not now have hundreds of thousands of people imagining that the government can create labor or manufacture wealth, any more than we should have a tariff which fattens eight millions of people upon the flesh and blood of thirty-four millions, and defies the principles which have been established science in the region of political economy for a whole century.

Another count in the indictment of the social

pessimist is that the average morality of America has for some years past been deteriorating very rapidly. This count must be allowed, and the worst thing about it is that the deterioration is of that virtue which is the binding cement of all true society,—the virtue of integrity. It is not contended that the vices of intemperance and licentiousness have grown upon us. The facts, if we could get at them all, would probably show that in these respects we have been getting on. But whereas crimes of sensuality and intemperance were venial at the beginning of the century, now crimes of dishonesty are so. The abuse of public and of private trusts has been a startling feature of our recent social and political life. And what has been done on a large scale by national and state and county financiers, and by bank presidents and insurance managers, has been done on a small scale by people everywhere. In the hard times of 1857 people who could not earn but 50 cents a day lived upon 50 cents a day and gave up all their little luxuries; ate bread without butter, and drank coffee without milk. Now the same class of people earning \$1 a day live at the rate of \$2 a day, and let the grocer and the butcher pay the balance. Now they must have the best of everything, money or no money. This is the rule, but here again, of course, there are exceptions: men and women starving everywhere rather than eat the bread of charity or that for which they cannot pay.

It is easy enough to account in some degree

for these diseased and moribund conditions of our social life. They are to some extent, to a considerable extent, the offspring of those "good times" of the war when, with a currency monstrously inflated, wages were high, money was plenty, and extravagant expenditure was the order of the day. Those were the times when bounty-money, which should have been as sacred as the lives it symbolized, vanished "like the dew of heaven on the cliffs of Foulah." Women who had never had a ten-dollar-bill of their own in all their lives before spent hundreds in a few days of glorious shopping. Contractors for the government earned thousands and millions of dollars in a few months or years. And then came the reaction. The bounty-money had been spent. The real estate shrank to a fraction of its original nominal value. The need of plain living became every day more evident. But the habits of extravagance engendered by the abominable "good times" were not easily altered. The luxuries and dainties must be had, paid for or not paid for. Hence defalcations on the right hand and the left; hence general defect of honesty, and with this the loss of self-respect and ever deeper shame. Alas! the blood of our young heroes was not the dearest price we paid for national union and emancipation!

If we had had here in America a type of religion pre-eminently moral, insisting above all things upon righteousness, it is quite possible that the destructive energy of an inflated currency might have been counteracted. But in fact the prevailing type of our religion has been and is

pre-eminently unmoral ; it insists upon righteousness not first of all, but last of all. Salvation is the principal thing, and righteousness has nothing whatever to do with the matter of salvation. This depends not upon character, but upon faith in the atoning merits of the blood of Jesus. If this religion had been a development of recent times, it would have had but little influence in the working out of our social problem. But it was on the ground when the demoralizing influences of the war, or rather of its attendant circumstances, first made themselves felt. It was in the grain of the community, *bit in* by centuries of preaching and teaching and ecclesiastical routine. And being what it was, it was a religion which, instead of counteracting the evil influences of the abominable "goods times," conspired with these for the destruction of our moral life. The natural corollary of not paying one's own moral debts was not paying one's own business debts. If mercantile morality had nothing to do with salvation, why be so very anxious about mercantile morality? No wonder then that, almost without exception, the abuse of sacred trusts, the squandering of other people's money, has been the fault of men of highest evangelical repute, of marked religiosity, active beyond all others in their respective churches, "shining like stars in the firmament." No wonder that when the demoralization of the abominable "good times" was joined in marriage with the doctrine of *salvation without character*, the children born of such a marriage have been Dishonesty and Faithlessness.

There is another sign of the religious aspect

of the times which demands some brief consideration. The old theology has lost its hold upon the more intelligent and cultivated people in America. But in the majority of cases, instead of boldly declaring their convictions, these keep up a show of orthodox belief and worship. If now and then they have a twinge of conscience and consult the rector or the minister, he confesses privately that he is very much of their opinion. Asked to read a certain service in a certain church, I declined. "Why," said the gentlemanly warden, "two thirds of the congregation put their own construction on these words. Why can't you do the same?" And so we go. The ignorance of the community is still implicitly devoted to the popular theology. The intelligence of the community keeps up an appearance which has no basis of reality. It is this state of things which might well make Ezra Stiles exclaim, if he were living now, "It is the darkest day that ever America saw."

To these phenomena of mercantile dishonesty and unspiritual religion add the phenomena of wide-spread discontent prevailing in the industrial classes, the communistic schemes that form the staple of a world of senseless talk and lawless aspiration, which would make the general government a gigantic soup-house and compel its legislation to reflect the shifty sentiments of the untutored population, together with the spectacle of ignorant or malicious demagogues appealing to all that is most selfish, mean, and sordid in the human heart—and you have a horoscope which is

not so cheerful as might be ; which is indeed, and to no small degree, discouraging and ominous of ill. To cry peace, peace, when there is no peace is not the part of wisdom certainly. But no more is it the part of wisdom to exaggerate the popular discontent. The greater part of it is superficial, caused by the stress of present suffering and the enforced economies of our return to honest ways from our excursions into the illimitable void. Let there be honesty and frugality, with the readjustment of labor so that the overstocked departments of trade and manufacture shall make over their surplus to the short-handed agriculturists, and, with the return of general activity, even without the false and lying appearance of prosperity which we have left behind us, Kearney and his fellow-demagogues would, if I am not mistaken, find their occupation gone. For the rest, our hope of rescue from the vague unrest or practical result of communistic speculations lies in the education of the whole community, not merely of the poor and uneducated, but of the rich who have the form without the substance of enlightenment. When men of much apparent culture and intelligence advocate the conversion of our city government into a great labor bureau, as if the city had a private mine and mint at its disposal, or as if the burden of taxation were not already greater than the majority can bear, it is a sign that ignorance of the first principles of political economy is not confined to manual laborers, but is an omnipresent evil. But there is intelligence in the community which only needs a challenge sharp

enough to prove with overwhelming force that this great reformatory idea of a paternal bureaucratic government is one which we have been painfully disengaging ourselves from for hundreds of years ; one which has always been the stepping-stone of tyrants to their thrones ; and one which has ever been " the first and therefore the falsest that meets the mind when it begins to reflect on the reform of human society." If, with all the hoarded learning it has got from centuries of experience, the aggregate intelligence of modern society is not able to meet the great reformatory idea of a paternal, bureaucratic, communistic government in a fair field and " give it all it wants," then it deserves to be humiliated to the last degree. Well said John Milton, " Let Truth and Falsehood grapple ; who ever knew Truth to be put to the worse in a free and open encounter ?"

But the quarter from which I expect the greatest help in the solution of this labor problem, as we call it, is practical, not intellectual or argumentative. For it is from the justice and the faithfulness of individual men who in their various positions of responsibility shall carry themselves so wisely, so forbearingly, so tenderly, that they shall not only convince those in employment under them that the interests of capital and labor are identical, but shall make them each and all apostles of this doctrine up and down the land.

And yet it well may be that in all these formless discontents and foolish aspirations there is the promise and the potency of some more equitable

distribution of that wealth, which is the joint product of capital and labor, than we have yet attained unto. I am by no means sure that the exact relative value of the brains and hands concerned in all manufacturing is fairly expressed by the relative profits of the employer and employed. The world is still young, and it would be very strange if we had got already to the highest point attainable in these concerns and need not keep our minds open and receptive to some further revelation.

Moreover, in these discontents and aspirations may there not be a hint that our political economy, though excellent in its own sphere, does not exhaust the social problem in its entirety? Within the sphere of political economy it is a lawful saying, "He that will not work shall not eat." But there are those who cannot work, and, even of those who *will* not, the unwilling will is sometimes a disease as positive as cholera or typhus. These are phenomena of which our political economy takes no account. So then our social science, inspired by our Christianity or such other religion as we have, must take account of them. Here is the sphere for our paternal government. It is not for men and women "full-summed in all their powers," but for the weaklings and the drones; those to be cared for with a divine compassion, these to be dealt with firmly and compelled to earn their right to live.

It is not, then, to be denied that in *the state of the nation*, considered not merely as a working government but also as a society of upwards of

forty millions of men, women, and children, there is much that is not as those who love America would have it, much that is ill and portentous of yet greater ill to come. And in all the horoscope the most baleful star is that which ought to shine with the most cheerful light, the pole-star of religion. And yet I cannot doubt that out of all these sorrows and distresses the Spirit will yet lead us up and on. "He will bring upon us fear and dread and trial. He will torture us with the tribulation of his discipline, till he try us by his laws and test our soul. Then he will strengthen us and make our way straight for us and give us joy."

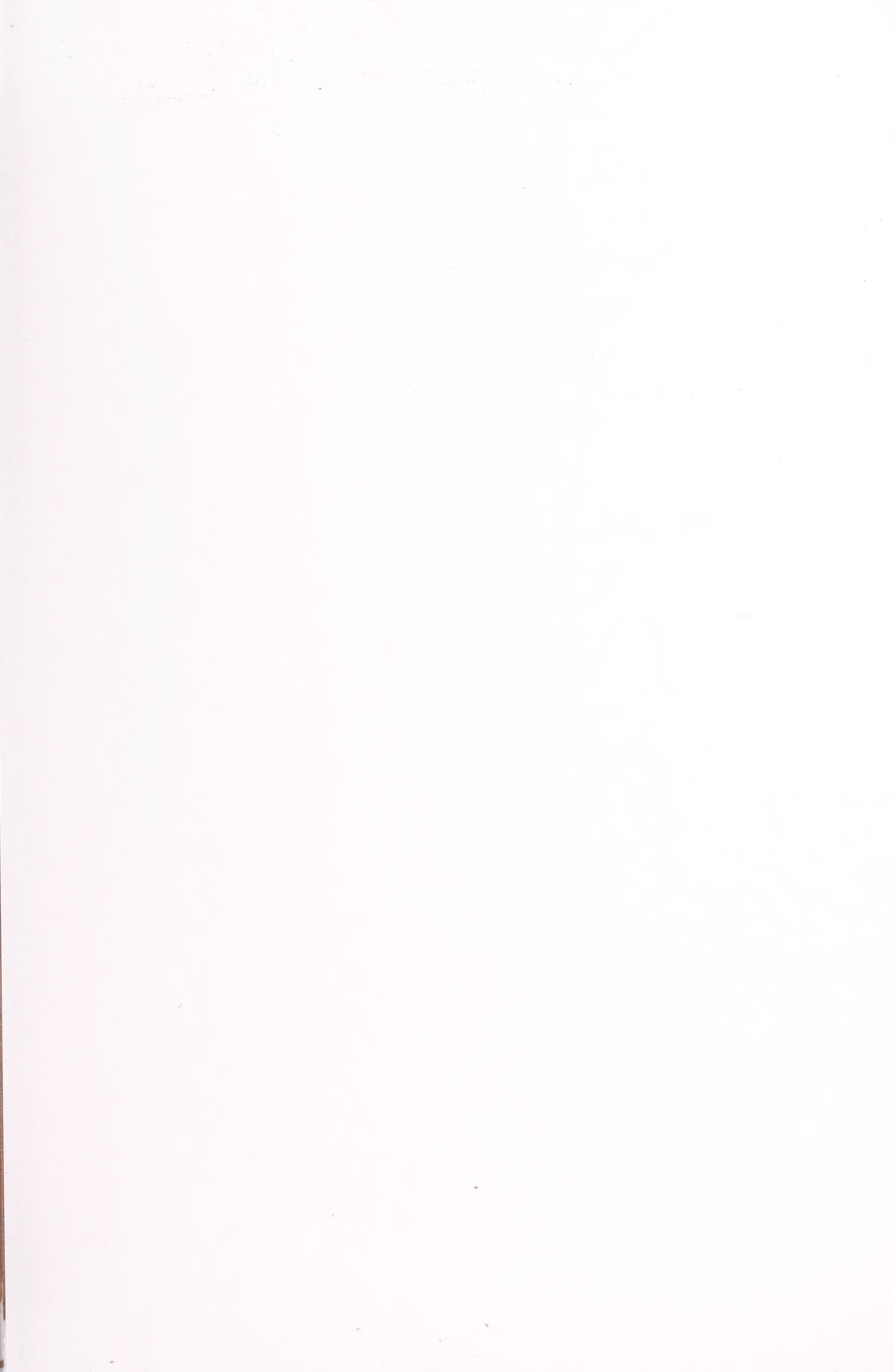
But one word more and I will end your weariness. It may be that you are asking, If these things are so, what ought a man to do who would acquit himself right manfully? Some hints I trust I have given on the way, but the one thing that he should do, and can, is to see to it that one single individual, namely himself, in the midst of whatever falsehood is true, in the midst of whatever dishonesty is honest, in the midst of whatever insincerity is sincere, and that, in the midst of whatever religion of glorified irresponsibleness, his religion is to him first and foremost a principle and law of righteousness. So doing, haply it shall be made plain to him how he can help in other ways to make America a righteous nation whose God is the Eternal.

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